

Sesotho Address Forms*

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Abstract

Address forms constitute an integral part of Basotho sociolinguistic etiquette. They are regarded as a kind of emotional capital that may be invested in putting others at ease. They are indicators of deference, politeness and markers of social distance. (Fasold 1990, Akindele 1990, 1991, 1993) This paper examines the address forms used by the Basotho people. It analyzes and discusses the various types and the factors determining their use. The discussion of address forms in Sesotho focuses on First Name, Title plus First Name, Title plus Last Name, Nickname, Multiple Names, and Teknonym. Drawing data from semi-literate and literate urban and rural population of Maseru district of Lesotho, it was found that the commonest form of address used by the Basotho people is title plus first name. e.g. ntate Thabo (father Thabo), 'm'e Puleng (mother Puleng), ausi Maneo (sister Maneo), abuti Mahao (brother Mahao). It is used by close relations, associates, and familiar people in both formal and informal situations.

1 Introduction

Terms of address are important linguistic mechanisms by which a speaker's attitude toward, and interpretation of his or her relationship with, a speaker is reflected. Inappropriate choice of the address hinders good communication between the speaker and the hearer. The importance of address forms cannot be overestimated in the use of language in any human society. They serve as an indicator of the social relationship between a speaker and a listener in terms of status and social distance. They are a kind of emotional capital, which may be invested in putting others at ease, and a means of saving one's 'face' (Brown/Levinson, 1978: 126).

Goffman (1964: 474) wrote "the rules of the conduct constitute part of the etiquette of the group and impose on each member an obligation to conduct themselves in a particular way towards others." Address and reference terms form part of such a practice. They are informed by rules of conduct and are an integral aspect of everyday interaction and conversational events that serve as a prelude to the establishment of social relations. Although address terms do not contribute to the content of discourse, they help mark different openings of boundaries of interactions. It is in the light of the significance of this aspect of sociolinguistic etiquette that Linguists and Sociologists give attention to the study of address forms in various cultures. See for example, (Brown/Ford 1964, Brown/Gilman 1962, Ervin-Tripp 1972, Paulston 1975, Blocker 1976, Fang/Hang 1983, Scotton/Zhu 1983, Mehrotra 1982, Fasold 1990, Akindele 1992, 1993), among others.

There is a paucity of literature on Sesotho forms of address except for their uses in literary genres. Nevertheless, an exploration of various forms of address in Sesotho may help in

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understanding the culture of the people and also in knowing the reason why the people behave the way they do in an encounter with others in different situations. The address terms examined in this paper are limited to names only. Pronouns and other forms were not included. It would constitute another subject for future research.

2 Overview of address forms

Several research works have been carried out on address terms particularly in American English and in some European languages. Notable among these studies are those of Brown/Ford (1961), Brown/Gilman (1972), Ervin-Tripp (1972), Lambert/Turker (1976), Blocker (1976), Fang/Heng (1983), Scotton/Zhu (1983), and Mehrotra (1982). There are also some studies of address terms done among some African cultures Soyoye (1984) and Akindele (1991, 1992), Salami (2004).

Studies on address forms indicate that they are really a part of complete semantic systems having to do with social relationships (Salami 2004). Many other devices are used for the expression of social relationships apart from addressing by name and second person pronouns. These include kin terms such as father, mother, brother, sister, uncle, niece, and cousin. The person with the higher occupational status also has the privilege of being addressed with title plus last name (TLN) while addressing the other person with first name (FN). However, Brown/Ford (1961: 460) argue that it is not always the case that older people have higher occupational status than younger ones. For instance, if there is a conflict between a young executive and an older janitor, it will be occupational status that takes precedence; that is, the janitor will be called by FN and he will address the executive by TLN (Brown/Ford 1961: 458).

Brown/Ford (1961: 459) also noticed that there was a natural progression from TLN to non-reciprocal TLN to mutual FN in American English address. That is, two people might start out calling each other by TLN then the other or higher status person might begin calling the other by FN and later they might use mutual FN. They also observe that once a speaker has begun using FN, he will never use TLN again with the same addressee except he uses the address form to express anger or reproof. In other words, if people are very angry enough with someone they usually address with FN, they might withdraw to TLN to symbolize the disruption of the relationship. When the issue that caused the trouble is resolved, they return to FN.

This is not necessarily so in some African cultures. For instance, Akindele (1991: 17) observes that it does not seem that when a speaker has begun using FN e.g. Modupe in Yoruba address, he will never use TLN such as Ms Benson again with the same addressee even when there is no quarrel between them. There could be instances when intimate friends who used to address each other with FN would use TLN e.g. Professor Taiwo or a Teknonym (TKM) such as *baba Ayodele* [father of Ayodele], Ayodele's father as a mark of deference in a social context.

It seems necessary at this point to explain the concept of TKM, Teknonym because of its constant use in this study. Teknonym can be described as a special category of names of the construct characterized by the combination of father or mother plus the personal name (F/MPN) of a child. It may also have such variations as Baba Ibadan (Ibadan father) which suggests an elderly male person who hails from Ibadan or who lived in the city of Ibadan for a long period of time. Others are named or addressed after the place they lived in by someone or where one carries out one's daily business activities, as in Mama Eko (Mom who lives in Lagos), Mama Gbagi (Mummy who trades at Gbagi), Buroda Ikoyi (Senior brother who lives or works in Ikoyi Lagos). Teknonyms may also involve the addition of the names of the profession of one's child e.g. Baba doctor – Doctor's father, and the like (Akindele 1993: 89–

90). Typically, teknonym is used in informal contexts by spouses who prefer it to FN as an address term if they have children (Salami 2004). Married couples prefer addressing each other with teknonyms rather than FN.

Brown/Ford (1961) discovered in their study of American address form, the use of Multiple Names (MN) such as Brian James Trennepohl. This occurs when people who have become close friends find out that the exclusive use of mutual FN, Brian, for example, no longer seems enough to symbolize friendship. In this case, they will address each other with MN. That is, they will sometimes use TLN, Mr. Trennepohl; sometimes FN (Brian) or LN (Trennepohl) or a nickname (NN), Bobby (Brown/Ford 1961: 450). These address forms are not used to express anger: they are used in more or less free variation; and the person who uses MN need not be reciprocal.

Leeds-Hurwitz (1980) study also highlights the use of MN. She reports how a woman who had just been promoted to a somewhat ambiguous position in a business concern used non-reciprocal MN to help her carve out her place in the institutional hierarchy. The use of MN form of address is discernible in Yoruba in modern times. For instance, some of my close friends sometimes address me as Femi (FN), Dr. Akindele (TLN) and at times Akindele (LN). When they do so, such address terms are not used to express anger; rather it is believed that it is done out of intimacy and mutual relationship. Such address terms are very often non-reciprocal.

Ervin-Tripp (1972) in her research on address terms based on American academic community located in the West observes that speakers who are on reasonably close terms with the addressee use some form of TLN. This agrees with Brown/Ford's (1964) and Fasold's (1990) observations of the use of address terms in American English. This is also observable in Yoruba use of address term e.g. *Ogbeni* Taiwo (Mr Taiwo).

One other form of address term found in American English is a nickname. That is, name used informally instead of one's own name. This is usually given because of one's character or as a short form of the actual name. It is said to be a non-reciprocal form of address. Such an address form is found in Yoruba use of address, for instance; *Femi* (Olufemi). The only situation where the use of nickname is non-reciprocal in Yoruba is when one of the parties to the interaction has none.

Fasold (1990: 78) observes that in American English the use of Last Name (LN) alone is in general rare and that it is common only in certain occupation groups and normally among people of the same sex. He adds that FN + LN is seldom or never used except by angry parents in giving orders to children. This seems to be the case among the Yoruba use of address forms of this type. For instance, a mother could call her child to order by merely shouting e.g. Olufemi Akindele. On the other hand, an intimate friend could address the other one with FN + LN on certain occasions, say, for instance, meeting one another after several months or years, e.g. Laolu Ayodele, Iyabo Adewale.

Fasold (1990: 78) also suggests that a lay - person is more likely to be addressed by FN than a religious person, or a casual friend than a less intimate acquaintance person of the same sex than one of the opposite sex. The suggestion holds for Yoruba as well; but is not the case for the Basotho. Although there seems to be considerable agreement on what characteristics lead to FN, TLN and MN usage; there is a considerable individual variation about what combination of these characteristics represent enough solidarity to justify using each of the terms.

From the available literature on the form and uses of address in Yoruba, there is evidence that very little or nothing significant has been done in the area. There are, however, all types of the uses of address forms that can be inferred from Yoruba literary genres. These genres do not specifically focus on address forms but could be seen as indicating their uses particularly

when characters in such texts address one another and at different occasions. Some of the studies on Yoruba address forms are Soyoye (1984) and Akindele (1991, 1992).

Soyoye (1984) concluded a study of the nominal terms of address in Standard Yoruba and Standard French. He observes that it is not normal to address someone with TLN in Standard Yoruba. The normal occurrence is to address people by Title (T) only (p. 31). Such titles include: occupational titles e.g. *Oluwa mi* – (my lord) for a judge, *dokita* – medical doctor, *Omowe* – Ph.D. holder, *Ojogbon* – Professor, *Olootu* – editor, *Ogagun* – top army officer; Chieftancy titles e.g. *Oloye* – chief, *Oba*, *kabiyesi* – king etc.; religious titles e.g. *Alufa* – Pastor, *Eniowo* – Reverend.

Soyoye (1984: 29f.) also observes that members of the Yoruba family, their friends and neighbours older than the speaker receive dad or mum. Those that are not old enough are normally addressed as brother, sister, aunt. He points out that wives address their brother/sister-in-law (whether older or younger), brother, uncle, sister, aunt e.g. brother Femi, Sister Peju, Uncle Dele, Aunt Toyin. This practice is very current. It is as a result of cultural contact with the Europeans, which led to language change. Traditionally, wives are normally addressed by nicknames which were derived from physical attributes of the persons concerned e.g. *agba owu* – plumpy/fat girl/woman; *akuruyejo* – short beautiful lady; *adumaradan* – dark beautiful lady; *ibadi aran* – a lady with prominent buttocks.

Akindele (1991, 1992) studies on Yoruba address forms observe among others, predominant use of titles (T) such as Omowe (Doctor), Alhaji (Mecca Pilgrim), Oluko (teacher); as well as the use of teknonymy such as mama Janet (mother Janet – Janet's mother), baba Dele (father Dele – Dele's father). The studies concluded that the Yoruba are fond of titles to the extent that they could be annoyed when they are not addressed with their appropriate titles; and those without titles preferred to be addressed with TKM. It was also concluded that the Yoruba do not favour the use of first names (FN) except among students and modern-day western educated people.

In a related study on Yoruba address forms, Salami (2004) focuses on the usage of first names (FN), teknonyms (TKM) and pet names (PN) by Yoruba-speaking women in addressing and referring to their husbands. The study demonstrates how language use helps to carry and reinforce gender relations; and examines the influence of the changing social structure such as the variables of education, age and region of origin on Yoruba women's use of address forms with their spouses.

It focuses on such questions as how a woman would address her husband (1) when together alone (2) when in the presence of husband's parents, (3) when in the presence of children and (4) during courtship. Salami (2004:2) shows that the use of first names, teknonyms and pet names or terms of endearment as address forms by Yoruba women in relation to their spouses is not only variable but that the patterns of use can be structured according to the women's age, educational attainment and region of origin within the Yoruba-speaking South-western Nigeria. In FN usage, the study demonstrates also that changes in the role-relationships between a Yoruba man and his wife, from a fiancée to a wife and also as mother, have a significant impact on Yoruba women and their use of address terms. Furthermore, the paper shows that although in traditional Yoruba society wives do not address their husbands by first names in the presence of their parents-in-law and children, younger women and post-secondary educated women are, today, motivating changes in the use of address terms by Yoruba women (Salami 2004: 9).

Afful (2007: 3) studied address terms usage among university students in Ghana. Using an ethnographic-style design, he examines the use of four descriptive phrases such as denotatively and culturally pejorative: Kwasea Boy ('stupid boy'), Naughty Boy and Foolish Man as address terms by students in a Ghanaian public university (Afful 2007: 5). Analysis of these

address terms indicate that these address terms were conditioned by context of situation and socio-cultural indices such as solidarity, gender, age as well as pragmatic factors. The findings suggest that the descriptive phrase (DP) provides a description of a person to enable him/her to know that s/he is being addressed; that is, it functions principally as an attention getter and identifier. In most cases, when addressers are not known by their names but ought to be distinguished from others around, DPs are used. The most interesting group of DPs, Kwasea Boy tended to be used reciprocally among male students of either the same or similar age. Its English equivalents, Naughty Boy and Foolish Boy/Man, were used in a similar vein (Afful 2007: 8).

3 Theoretical Background

3.1 Definition of terms: Basotho and Sesotho

Perhaps it may be necessary to define the terms *Sesotho* and *Basotho* as used in this study before proceeding to discuss the methodology employed. Lesotho is a landlocked country entirely surrounded by the Republic of South Africa and has a population of about 2 million people. The people are referred to as Basotho (pl.) and Mosotho (sg). The Basotho people emerged from the accomplished diplomacy of Moshoeshe I who brought together and united clans of Sotho-Tswana origin that had dispersed across southern Africa in the early nineteenth century. They were largely Bantu-speaking ethnic groups during Bantu migrations. Today, they live mostly in Lesotho in the ten administrative districts namely Maseru, Berea, Mochale's Hoek, Quithing, Qacha's Nek, Leribe, Butha Buthe, Mafeteng, Mochotlong, Thaba Tseka and in the Republic of South Africa.

The language spoken is Sesotho. Sesotho is a Bantu language, belonging to the Niger-Congo language family. It is most closely related to three other major languages in the Sotho-Tswana language group: Setswana (spoken in Botswana), the Northern Sotho languages (spoken in South Africa) and Silozi (spoken in Zambia). *Sesotho* is, and has always been, the name of the language itself, and this term has come into wider use in South Africa and in Lesotho. Sesotho is also sometimes referred to as *Southern Sotho*, principally to distinguish it from Northern Sotho, the South African variety.

In Lesotho, Sesotho is the national and one of the two official languages, English being the second one. Sesotho is spoken by all the Basotho regardless of the different ethnic groups to which they belong. That is why it is always said that Lesotho is "one nation, one language". (Mokitimi 1997: xviii). Nevertheless, there are several people of Nguni origin who speak their own language in their districts, such as Setaung, Setebele, Sephuthi, (Akindele 2002: 64). The term Basotho is used in this study to mean "Sesotho speakers," and "residents of Lesotho". Thus, all minor ethnic groups living in Lesotho such as speakers of Nguni languages Sephuthi, Setebele and Setaung, which have been heavily influenced by Sesotho are considered to be Sesotho speakers.

3.2 Methodology

Researchers in the area of address terms have employed various methods of collecting data. Some have used native speaker introspection and others have used personal observations cross-checked to a greater extent by native-speakers (Akindele 1991). The present study entails another approach namely collection of data by means of questionnaire and introspection by native speakers from within their own circle of friends and relations in both urban and peri-urban Maseru, the capital of Lesotho. Forty-five third year students taking my Discourse Analysis course in 2001/2002 at the National University of Lesotho assisted in collecting the various forms of Sesotho address terms from their friends and relations by means of audio-

recording. The recordings involved 200 people drawn from urban and rural Maseru district of Lesotho. The students who also used participant observation, made notes of people's address behaviour. These involved adults, male/female of differing ages in various places: shopping centres, offices, on the streets, village gatherings, families, and funerals. The audio-recorded address forms were jointly transcribed by the researcher and some of the students-reporters. The transcriptions were then cross-checked with other Sesotho speakers who were academic colleagues in the university. The advantage of this method is that data passes through two stages of introspection by native speakers i.e. the informants and student reporters.

Secondly, questionnaires were also administered on selected 200 Basotho drawn from the same set of 250 people whose interactions were earlier on recorded in the urban and rural Maseru district on how they address people in formal and informal settings. The questionnaire which was administered by some of my Basotho students includes forms of address used in interactions such as: Friend/friend, close relations, subordinates/boss, boss/subordinates, boss/boss, co-workers, schoolmate/teachers, schools mates/school mates, among others.

Also, factors determining the choice of address terms were asked. Some of these factors are dictated by the context of the situation. These factors were obtained from the responses to some of the questionnaires administered. The average age of the subjects was 25 to 50 years. The participants were literate and semi literate male and female. In the population studied, 100 were male and 100 female. In the group, 120 were married while 80 were single.

The following questions were asked the subjects about the use of Sesotho address terms:

1. How do you address your friends/relations at work?, with FN, TKM, TFN, NN, TLN?
2. How do you address them outside the workplace?, with FN, TKM, TFN, NN, TLN?
3. Do you address persons who have no children with TKM, TFN, NN, FN, TLN?
4. Do you address those with children with TKM, TFN, TLN, NN, FN?
5. How do you address those in 3 when you talk about them to others?
6. How do you refer to those in 4 when you talk about them to others?

4 Analysis of Sesotho address forms

Sesotho address forms uses are determined by such factors as location, status, age and sex. Of all these, *age* seemed to be an overriding factor in the use of address terms among the Basotho. The observations made by the students who collected the data for the study reveals that the Basotho use the following forms of address:

1. Title (T) only: *Moruti* (pastor/priest), *ntate* (father), *monghali* (Mr), *Mm'e* (mother), *mofumahali* (Mrs/madam), *matsamaisi* (master), *mofumahatsana* (Miss), *abuti* (older brother), *ausi* (older sister), *moruti* (pastor/reverend), *morena* (Chief), *moholo* (superior/elder brother/elder of the church), *Mmangwane* (maternal aunt), *rakgali* (paternal aunt), *malome* (maternal uncle), *rangwane* (paternal uncle).
2. Title with first name (TFN): 'Mm'e Pulane, Mm'e Palesa, Ntate Raphael, Mm'e Maneo, Mm'e Mpho.
3. Title with last name (TLN): Ntate Marumo, Ntate Tsikoane, Mm'e Motsamai, Mm'e Likoti, Moruti Mokhathi (Pastor Mokhathi), Ntate Mokoena.
4. First names: Thato, Karabo, Palesa, Seabata, Shale, Mothusi, Pulane/Puleng.
5. Nicknames: Sido for Mosito, Itu/Ido for Itumeleng.
6. Multiple names: Maneo Mpho Maphisa, Lineo Lerato Ntsike.

7. Teknonyms: Mathato (mother of Thato), Mampho (mother of Mpho), Ntat'alimpho (father of Limpho, Mmapapa (mother who sells food – papa).

In Sesotho, address terms derived from titles are of different kinds. There are those that are derived from professions e.g. *sistere* (nun/sister), *mookamedi* (headmaster), *moruti* (pastor/priest). Others are derived from chieftaincy e.g. *morena* (chief); and still many others are derived from kinship terms e.g. *moholo* (superior/elder brother/elder of the church), *Mmangwane* (maternal aunt), *Rakgali* (paternal aunt), *Malome* (maternal uncle), *Rangwane* (paternal uncle), *Ntate* (father), *Monghali* (Mr), *Mm'e* (mother), *Mofumahali* (Mrs/madam), *Matsamaisi* (Master), *Mofumahatsana* (Miss), *abuti* (brother), *ausi* (sister).

As indicated above, teknonymy is a form of address derived from a combination of the name of the child and its father or mother (F/M + PN = TKM). These are: *Mmathato* (mother of Thato), *Mmampho* (mother of Mpho, *Ntat'alimpho* (father of Limpho, *Mmapapa* (mother who sells food – papa). In Sesotho, teknonyms have attained the status of real names particularly for women. It is often found that some women particularly those with children are addressed as *Mmasechaba*, *Mmamuso*, *Mmampho*, and these have become their real names among the Basotho after their prolonged use. Teknonymy can thus be defined as the practice among certain peoples of Africa of renaming a parent after a child. A teknonym is therefore a name or an address term that is a combination of a parent's name and the name of his/her child, and which in most cases has attained the status of proper names, such as *Mmalerato*, *Ntatalimpho*.

Three types of teknonyms are discernible in Sesotho address forms. They are derived from the following combinations: the name of the child plus mother/father (N + M/F), kinship term plus business (KT + B); a child's profession plus father/mother (CN + F/M). The first category involves naming the father/mother after the child's personal name and addressing the man/woman as such. This is quite common among the Basotho. Thus, one hears very frequently such names or address terms as illustrated above. This type of term of address is used for married couples with children.

The second type of teknonym is derived from a combination of kinship terms and the business of the person involved, as in: *Mmapapa* (mother who sells mealie meal papa). The third category of teknonym involves the addition of the names of the profession of the child(ren) plus father/mother, as in the following examples: *matichere* (mother of teacher), *ntat'amoruti* (father of priest/reverend father).

The use of teknonym was noted to be more common among women than men in Lesotho. This compares favourably with its use among the Yoruba of Nigeria, the Swazis of Swaziland and the Batswana of Botswana among others. It was observed that there is considerable variation in the use of first name, title with first name, title with last name and multiple names, as outlined sequentially below:

- FN is common among school peers.
- TFN/TLN among adults.
- TKM used at work and outside work place by familiar people.
- TFN is the commonest Sesotho form of address.

It was also observed that there were differences in the use of address forms in the urban areas and in the villages. This could be a consequence of acculturation in the urban setting e.g. *Tichere* (teacher), *Sistere* (sister).

Address terms are used as a marker of social status among the Basotho. For instance, a special title other than *Ntate* (Mr) or *'Mm'e* (Mrs/Miss), can be used to distinguish gender. In formal situations, *Monghali* (Mr), *Mofumahali* (Mrs), *Mofumahatsana* (Miss) and *Mohlankana*

(youngman, boy, Master of ceremonies) are used respectively to differentiate between married men and women and unmarried girls and boys.

Brown/Ford (1961) observe that in American English, if people are very angry with someone they usually address with FN, they might withdraw to TLN to symbolise the disruption of the relationship. When the issue that caused trouble is resolved, they return to FN, for example: *How are you, James (FN)?; I'm well, Mr Carter (TLN)*. This is not so with the Basotho. It was observed by my informants that when a speaker has begun using FN in Basotho address, he/she might use TLN again with the same addressee even when there is no quarrel between them. There were instances when intimate friends who used to address each other with FN used TLN or teknonym as a mark of deference in a given social context. For instance, at the workers meeting which involved the junior workers complaining about the conditions of their work place, the following discourse took place between close friends before the commencement of the meeting:

A: *Ho Joang 'Mm'e Mmaitumeleng?*
How is it Itumeleng's mother (TKN)

B: *Ho monate 'Mm'e Mmat'sepo.*
It's fine T'sepo's mother (TKN)

And during the meeting, the following encounter ensued between the two participants:

A: *Mookameli oa ka, ke kopa u fane ka maikutlo.*
My superior, please give your opinion.

B: *E a monate...*
Thanks...

Ervin-Tripp (1969: 230) remarks that a priest, physician, dentist, or judge may be addressed by title alone, but a plain citizen may not. In these cases, if the name is unknown, the only option of address form that is available is *sir* and *ma'am*. The following serves to illustrate the point. Note that the parentheses refer to optional elements, the bracketed elements are social selection categories.

[Cardinal]:	Your excellency
[US President]:	Mr President
[Priest]:	Father (+ LN)
[Nun]:	Sister (+ religious name)
[Physician]:	Doctor (+ LN)
[Ph.D., Ed.D.] etc.:	Doctor (+ LN)
[Professor]:	Professor (+ LN)
[Adult] etc.:	(Mister + LN), (Mrs + LN), (Miss + LN)

Similar address forms are found in Sesotho address and are used in similar ways, though there could be variations, depending on the context of situation, as indicated above.

With respect to social class differences in the use of address terms, Ervin-Tripp (1969) remarks that members of lower-status occupational groups often use titles such as *Doctor* without last name as address forms. Similar use of address is found in Sesotho address form but also TLN is used quite often, as in *Ntate Morolong*.

Another form of address rules has to do with the way Americans address strangers in public situations. Where male or female's name is unknown, it is common to use the respect form *ma'am* or *sir* respectively. Terms of endearment such as *dear* or *hon* are used quite frequently to address women and *sir* to address men. In Sesotho address forms, women are addressed as

'*mm'e* and men as *ntate*. There could be a variation if the relationship between the two interactants is known e.g. *moholo* (superior/elder brother/elder of the church, *malome* (maternal uncle), *magwane* (maternal aunt), *ranwane* (paternal uncle), *abuti* (elder brother), *ausi* (elder sister).

5 Data analysis

In what follows, an analysis of the data collected with the aid of questionnaire is undertaken. This is followed by a discussion of the findings. The baseline used in calculating the percentage scores for each questionnaire is 200. For instance, if a total number of 150 subjects respond positively to the use of TFN, that means that it is 150 out of 200 people that responded. The percentage of this figure is therefore 75%. The following tables summarise the various responses to the questionnaire.

5.1 Findings

Participants	FN		TKM		TLN		NN		TFN		Gross Total %
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
200 people	30	15	50	25	60	30	5	2.5	55	27.5	100
100 males	5	2.5	10	5	50	25	5	2.5	30	15	50
100 females	5	2.5	45	22.5	25	12.5	5	2.5	20	10	50

Table 1: Responses to questionnaire 1:

How do you address your friends/relations at work? With FN, TKM, TFN, NN, TLN?

The findings in Table 1 show that out of the 200 people interviewed on how they would address people at work, 25% said they would employ Teknonym, 30% use title + last name, 15% use first name, while 2.5% said they would address such people with nickname and 27.5% will address people with TFN. The table further suggests that 5% of the males use TKM while only 22.5% of females use it. 25% of the male interviewees use TLN while 12.5% of the females do; and for FN 2.5% males and 2.5% females use it respectively. 2.5% males and 2.5% females said they use nicknames to address people at work. 15% male said they use TFN and 10% female use this form of address.

Participants	FN		TKM		TLN		NN		TFN		Gross Total %
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
200 people	10	5	50	25	60	30	10	5	70	35	100
100 males	5	2.5	5	2.5	35	17.5	5	2.5	40	20	50
100 females	5	2.5	35	17.5	20	10	5	2.5	35	17.5	50

Table 2: Responses to questionnaire 2:

How do you address them outside the workplace? With FN, TKM, TFN, NN, TLN?

Table 2 contains the findings on the use of address forms outside the workplace. The table indicates that 25% subjects claimed that they use TKM; out of these, 2.5% were males and 17.5% were females. 30% of those interviewed also said they use TLN. This is made up of 17.5% males and 10% females. Only 5% of the subjects use FN made up of 2.5% males and 2.5% females. 2.5% male use NN and 2.5% female said they use NN, and this includes 8.35% males and 8.35 females respectively. In all 35% use TFN made up of 25% male and 15% female.

Participants	FN		TKM		TLN		NN		TFN		Gross Total %
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
200 people	10	5	90	45	40	20	0	0	55	27.5	100
100 males	5	2.5	15	7.5	30	15	0	0	50	25	50
100 females	5	2.5	40	20	30	17.5	0	0	25	12.5	50

Table 3: Responses to questionnaire 3:

Do you address persons who have no children with TKM, TFN, NN, FN, TLN?

Table 3 summarizes the findings on how interviewees address persons with children in face-to-face interaction. The table indicates that 45% of the subjects employ TKM and this is made up of 7.5% males and 32.5% females. 20% use TLN and this group is made up of 12% males and 8% females. Only 10% of the population interviewed uses FN and this consists of 2.5% males and 2.5% females. None of the subjects use NN. 27.5% of the subjects use TFN made up 20% males and 7.5% females.

Participants	FN		TKM		TLN		NN		TFN		Gross Total %
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
200 people	12	6	100	50	40	20	0	0	48	27.5	100
100 males	4	2	40	20	30	8.3	0	0	41	18	50
100 females	8	4	60	60	22	11.7	0	0	20	9.5	50

Table 4: Responses to questionnaire 4:

Do you address those with children with TKM, TFN, TLN, NN, FN?

Table 4 reflects the results of how the subjects interviewed address people who have no children in face-to-face interactions. The results show that 50% of the subjects use TKM; this is made up of 20% males and 30% females. 20% of those interviewed made up of 11.7% males and 8.3% females use TLN, while 6% consisting of males 2% and female 4% use FN. None of the subjects use NN. And for TFN, 27.5% use this term, made up of 18% male and 9.5% female.

Participants	FN		TKM		TLN		NN		TFN		Gross Total %
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
200 people	10	5	55	27.5	70	35	0	0	65	32.5	100
100 males	6	3	24	12.5	30	20	0	0	40	20	50
100 females	4	2	40	25	20	15	0	0	36	12.5	50

Table 5: Responses to questionnaire 5:

How do you address those in 3 when you talk about them to others?

The findings in Table 5 are responses to how participants refer to persons with children when they talk about them to others. The table shows that 27.5% of the subjects made up of 10% males and 17.5% females employ TKM; 35% consisting of 15% males and 20% females use TLN. 5% made up of 3% males and 2% females use FN, while none of the subjects interviewed use NN. 32.5% use TFN made up of 20% males and 12.5% females.

Participants	FN		TKM		TLN		NN		TFN		Gross Total %
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
200 people	15	7.5	60	30	45	22.5	0	0	80	40	100
100 males	5	3	20	12	30	15	0	0	45	22.5	50
100 females	5	2	35	18	20	10	0	0	40	20	50

Table 6: Responses to questionnaire 6:

How do you refer to those in 4 when you talk about them to others?

Table 6 comprises the findings on how the participants talk to others about persons with no children. The table suggests that 30%, made up of 12% males and 18% females. 22.5% of the subjects comprising 13% males and 9.5% females use TLN; 7.5% consisting of 5% males and 2.5% females use FN, while none of the subjects use NN. 40% use TFN overall made up of 30% males and 10% females. The overall findings from all the tables indicate that out of the 1200 instances of the use of address and reference forms 415 (34.2%) were of the use of TKM on various occasions and circumstances; 315 (26%) were of the use of TLN; 373 (31.8%) were of the use of TFN, while 87 (7.4%) were of the use of FN. Only 15 (1.2%) were of the use of NN. The students' as well as the researcher's observations corroborate the above findings.

5.2 Discussion of findings

The overall response to the questionnaires on address and reference forms in Sesotho shows that a greater percentage of the subjects interviewed prefer the use of teknonym followed closely by TFN and TLN. This, however, varies from one conversational event to another as well as the age and social status and relationship of the participants involved. For instance, table 1 shows that there is the tendency on the part of workers to address one another with TLN – a term for formal occasions or setting, hence the greater percentage for the use of such a form. Further analysis of the data suggests that those that would use TLN for others at work were those who were not familiar with the addressee or those that were subordinates to their bosses. The only polite way of enacting social relationship at that level is the use of TLN. The response to the use of TKM closely follows that of TFN and TLN in terms of number and popularity. The reason given by the informants/colleagues for its use is that sometimes at work co-workers are so friendly with each other that they prefer using the informal form of address to the formal type. And of the four less formal types – TKM, TFN, FN and NN, TKM, TFN and TLN seem to be more favoured. This is because it does not only signal familiarity but also some kind of respect is reflected.

Table 2 indicates clearly that the use of teknonym, TFN and TLN is favoured outside workplace. This may be so because of the informal situations that were involved while such an address form was employed. Indeed, the participants involved in the use of TKM, TFN and TLN claimed to be either close friends or persons of unequal status in terms of age. Note that the address forms are used as a marker of familiarity, and an indicator of deference to the persons thus addressed.

Tables 3 to 6 suggest that there is the tendency among the Basotho to use teknonym, title plus first name and title plus last name for married people with or without children in either face-to-face interactions or when they are being talked about. The reason given is that the use of the terms shows familiarity on the part of both parties involved, as well as respect for the person thus addressed. It was argued by the informants/colleagues that the use of first name and nickname does not reflect such features in Basotho social interaction. Informants/colleagues further argued that the use of first name and nickname is foreign to Basotho culture. Since they do not reflect one's social or economic status within the Basotho cultural continuum, hence they tend to be avoided.

A closer look at the findings indicates that women use TKM and TLN more than men do. They also favour the use of TLN more than men; while men favour the use of TFN and TLN. The reason given for this is that women take more pride in being addressed with TKM and TLN since these enhance their social status within the society. This also accounts for TKM being used as personal names for women, as indicated above. It shows her as a responsible parent or some highly respected person: as the wife of some person. Consequently, being addressed with these two forms gives the woman more respect than being addressed with FN

and NN. The female subjects interviewed also believed that due respect must be accorded their male counterparts hence they (women) constantly use TKM or TLN for men. Married couples also address each other with TKM at home and informal situations. This is considered as a marker of respect or deference.

It was also discovered that the participants interviewed found it more polite to address people and to be addressed with TKM, TLN, TFN in less formal situations. They claimed that they were more comfortable with them rather than either or NN on most occasions involving the use of address terms. It should be pointed out that the participants indicated that at times they use Title only and a variant of TLN and TFN particularly in face-to-face interactions.

6 Conclusion

The paper is an attempt to examine the use of address forms in Sesotho. It has been discovered that the forms of address commonly used by the Basotho are titles only, title + last name, title + first name and teknonymy. The titles vary from those derived from kinship terms, chieftaincy, social and economic achievement as well as the religion of the people. Address forms such as first names and nicknames are rarely used. Indeed, first names are often used when addressing children or a person who is very junior to the person using it. One other finding of this study is that the address term teknonymy appears to be a common feature of address in African societies. This can be seen in the Batswana, Yoruba, Sotho-related cultures of Southern Africa, among others. Finally, although this study has unveiled some aspects of Sesotho culture more studies need to be conducted to determine the variations that may exist from one district of the country to the other. Nevertheless, the study could be used as a starting point.

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